

How much does the Expanded AFP blood test cost?

The test costs \$105. Most prepaid health plans and insurance companies pay for the test. Medi-Cal also pays for it.

The \$105 fee covers the blood test as well as authorized diagnostic tests at a State-approved Prenatal Diagnosis Center.

How can I get more information?

- ◆ **If you are under 35 years old:**
Ask your doctor or clinic for the booklet "The California Expanded AFP Screening Program."
- ◆ **If you will be 35 or older at delivery:**
Ask for the booklet "Choices in Prenatal Testing for Women 35 Years and Older."

These booklets are available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean.



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It is important to get prenatal care as soon as you think you are pregnant....

The care you receive can help you have a healthy baby.

The Expanded AFP blood test

Medical tests are part of prenatal care. One test is the Expanded AFP blood test. It helps find spina bifida and Down syndrome in babies before they are born. Spina bifida is a birth defect that usually causes paralysis in the lower part of the body. Down syndrome causes mental retardation. The Expanded AFP blood test also helps find some other birth defects.

Can I have the Expanded AFP blood test?

Yes. If you want it, just talk to your doctor. You will receive a booklet to read and sign.



Where and when can I get the Expanded AFP blood test?

A little blood is drawn from your arm at your doctor's office or at a lab. The test is done between 15 and 20 weeks of pregnancy (4 to 5 months).

The blood is tested for three things: AFP, HCG and UE.

All three of these substances are normally found in a woman's blood when she is pregnant.

How will I get the test result?

Your doctor or clinic will give you the result in 1 to 2 weeks.

What will the result show?

Most of the time it will show that you have normal amounts of the three substances in your blood. This means your baby probably does not have spina bifida, Down syndrome or certain other birth defects.

Sometimes a blood test will show higher or lower amounts of AFP, HCG or UE....

What does this mean?

It means that you will be offered follow-up tests at a State-approved Prenatal Diagnosis Center. These diagnostic tests can usually explain why the amounts were higher or lower than usual.

Most of the time, no birth defects are found during diagnostic tests. Most babies are born healthy, even when there are higher or lower amounts of AFP, HCG or UE.

Once in a while, a birth defect will be found by diagnostic tests. A counselor will help the woman or couple make decisions about the pregnancy.